

Syllabus  
**GMT5423 Fundamentals of Strategic Management**  
Prof. Dr. Korbinian Eichner  
Winter Semester 2023/24

<b>Level</b>	Master	
<b>Credits</b>	3	
<b>Student Contact Hours</b>	30 hours (180 minutes weekly in approx. the first half of the semester).	
<b>Workload</b>	90 hours (30 contact hours / 60 hours of self-study time).	
<b>Prerequisites</b>	Participants should have a high proficiency in English (B2).	
<b>Time</b>	Thursdays, 09:45 am – 01:00 pm. For specific dates, please see LSF.	
<b>Room</b>	W3.2.01. Please see LSF.	
<b>Start Date</b>	5 October 2023	
<b>Lecturer</b>	<b>Name</b>	Prof. Dr. Korbinian Eichner
	<b>Office</b>	W2.4.13
	<b>Virtual Office</b>	Upon request.
	<b>Office Hours</b>	Please see LSF.
	<b>Phone</b>	+49 7231 28 6585
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## Summary

The question of how a firm achieves a sustainable competitive advantage over its competitors while another firm fails to do so lies at the center of strategic management. Why is strategic management of importance to firms? Because the existence of a competitive advantage correlates strongly with a firm's financial success and that of its shareholders.

The course discusses the different building blocks of strategic management which can help a firm to generate a competitive advantage. The course also familiarizes the participants with various tools, concepts, and analytical frameworks that enhance their ability to define and analyze strategic problems, and to identify sources of competitive advantages from both an industry and firm-level perspective.

Having completed this course, students should be able to:

- To gain an overview of what strategic management is about.
- To develop the ability to think strategically about a business organization, its strategic position, and how to strive for a sustainable competitive advantage.
- To build skills in conducting strategic analysis in a variety of competitive situations and provide an understanding of the competitive challenges of firms.
- To give insights into the organizational processes by which strategies are formulated and executed.

## Course prerequisites

None.

## Outline of the Course

Topic no.	Topic:	Content:
1	Introduction to strategic management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is strategy and strategic management?</li><li>• Relationship between strategic management and financial performance.</li></ul>
2	Initiating strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Setting aspirations: missions, vision, values.</li><li>• Strategic planning processes.</li></ul>
3	Positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Execution of strategic analysis: External focus.</li><li>• Execution of strategic analysis: Internal focus.</li></ul>
4	Strategy Formulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development of a corporate strategy.</li><li>• Development of business level strategies.</li></ul>
5	Evaluating Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relevance of value creation and its critical assessment.</li><li>• Measurement of value creation.</li></ul>
6	Implementing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strategy execution process.</li><li>• Balanced Scorecard.</li></ul>

## Course Intended Learning Outcomes and their Contribution to Program Intended Learning Outcomes / Program Goals

Program Intended Learning Outcomes	Course Intended Learning Outcomes	Assessment Method
After completion of the program the students will be able...	After completion of the course the students will be able...	Written Exam
		100%
		Individual
<b>1 Responsible Leadership in Organizational Contexts</b>		
1.1 ... to know and explain important leadership principles.	... to understand and explain the role of strategy and strategic management in a business context.	X
1.2 ... to apply leadership concepts to an organizational context or a specific case.	... to think strategically about a business organization, its strategic position, and how to strive for a sustainable competitive advantage.	X
1.3 ... to critically reflect on leadership concepts in a certain organizational context or in a specific case.	... to conduct strategic analysis in a variety of competitive situations ... to understand the competitive challenges of firms. ... to understand organizational processes by which strategies are formulated and executed.	X
1.4 ... to act responsibly from a scientific self-understanding and to act professionally.		X
<b>2 Creative Problem Solving Skills in a Complex Business Environment</b>		
2.1 ... to identify & classify problems.	... to apply the process of positioning.	X
2.2 ... to analyze problems.	... to conduct internal and external strategic analyses.	X
2.3 ... to creatively solve problems.	... to develop corporate level and business level strategies.	X
2.4 ... to explain problems and their solutions in a comprehensive manner.	... to evaluate strategies based on their value creation potential. ... to measure the value creation potential of different strategies. ... to assess different strategies based on various dimensions. ... to plan the implementation/execution of selected strategies with a Balanced Scorecard.	X
<b>3 Applied research skills</b>		
3.1 ... to know the research and analysis methods important in his/her field of study.	... to critically assess the positioning of a firm. ... to critically reflect developed corporate level and business level strategies.	X
3.2 ... to appropriately apply the research and analysis methods.	... to evaluate strategies based on their value creation potential. ... to measure the value creation potential of different strategies. ... to assess different strategies based on various dimensions. ... to plan the implementation/execution of selected strategies with a Balanced Scorecard.	X
<b>5 Management of the challenges of global sustainability and awareness for social and corporate responsibilities</b>		
5.1 ... to have a sound basic knowledge of sustainability issues.	... to develop an understanding of the importance and relevance of values in strategic management.	X
5.2 ... to identify and analyze sustainability issues and their causes.	... to be able to apply a PESTEL analysis from the perspective of internationally competing firms.	X

## Teaching and Learning Approach

The course is organized as a lecture, but throughout the course emphasis is put on discussion and interaction with the students as well as exercises. This application-oriented approach should foster the transfer of concepts and methods learned to 'real-world' situations the students will be confronted with in the future.

The materials for the course will be distributed to the students on the e-learning platform.

## Literature and Course Materials

Johnson, G./Whittington, R./Regner, P./Scholes, K./Angwin, D.: Exploring Corporate Strategy, latest edition, Pearson.

Müller-Stewens, G./Lechner, C.: Strategisches Management: Wie strategische Initiativen zum Wandel führen, latest edition, Schäfer Poeschel.

Wunder, T.: Essentials of Strategic Management, latest edition, Schäfer Poeschel.

### Additional readings:

#### (a) Books (latest editions):

Grant, R.: Contemporary Strategy Analysis, Blackwell.

Porter, M.: Competitive Strategy: Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Competitors, Free Press.

Porter, M.: Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance, Free Press.

Rappaport, A.: Creating shareholder value: The new standard for business performance, Free Press.

#### (b) Articles:

Collins, J./Porras, J. (1996): Building Your Company's Vision, in: Harvard Business Review, Sep/Oct 1996, pp. 65-77.

Gluck, F./Kaufman, S./Walleck, A. (1980): Strategic Management for Competitive Advantage, in: Harvard Business Review, Jul/Aug 1980, pp. 154-161.

Johnson, M./Christensen, C./Kagermann, H. (2008): Reinventing Your Business Model, in: Harvard Business Review, Dec 2008, pp. 52-60.

Kaplan, R./Norton, D. (1996): Using the Balanced Scorecard as a Strategic Management System, in: Harvard Business Review, Jul / Aug 1996, pp. 75-85.

Mankins, M./Steele, R. (2005): Turning Great Strategy into Great Performance, in: Harvard Business Review, Jul/Aug 2005, pp. 64-72.

Neilson, G./Martin, K./Powers, E. (2008): The Secrets to Successful Strategy Execution, in: Harvard Business Review, Jun 2008, pp. 60-70.

Porter, M. (1979): How Competitive Forces Shape Strategy, in: Harvard Business Review, Mar/Apr 1979, pp. 21-38.

Porter, M. (1987): From Competitive Advantage to Corporate Strategy, in: Harvard Business Review, May 1987, p. 43-59.

Porter, M. (1996): What is Strategy, in: Harvard Business Review, Nov / Dec 1996, p. 61-78.

Porter, M. (2008): The Five Competitive Forces That Shape Strategy, in: Harvard Business Review, Jan 2008, pp. 79-93.

Rappaport, A. (2006): Ten Ways to Create Shareholder Value, in: Harvard Business Review, Sep 2006, pp. 66-77.

Slides, as well as other course and background material will be uploaded to Moodle throughout the semester.

## **Assessment**

The final grade will be based on  
a written examination (60 minutes, closed book) [100% of grade]

Exam:

The exam will cover the lecture material and include a mixture of open questions.

Grades will range between 1.0 (very good) and 5.0 (fail), in 0.3 and 0.7 steps.

- 1.0 Very good, a performance significantly above the average.
- 2.0 Good, an above average performance.
- 3.0 Satisfactory, an average performance.
- 4.0 Adequate, a below average performance with noticeable shortcomings.
- 5.0 Fail, an unacceptable performance.

## **Schedule**

Thursdays, 09:45 am – 01:00 pm. See LSF for further details.

## **Code of Conduct for online Teaching**

[Link to the Code of Conduct for online Teaching](#)